

# Poland's Leaders Praise Lithuanian Sovereignty

By JOHN KIFNER

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WARSAW, March 12 — Poland's Solidarity-led Government, which began the unraveling of Soviet domination of Eastern Europe, voiced cautious approval tonight of Lithuania's declaration of independence. Lech Walesa and other Solidarity leaders said they were delighted.

"The Government of the Polish Republic supports self-determination of nations, including self-determination leading to separate statehood," said a statement issued after the Council of Ministers met for hours. "Poles are interested in good relations with the nation of Lithuania as well as with all our neighbors."

But the statement took a somewhat cautionary tone, warning that "the interests of the nations of East Central Europe require that all the changes involving the just aspirations of nations are conducted in a peaceful manner with respect for the stability of our part of the continent," and voicing the hope that Lithuania and the Soviet Union would "resolve mutual problems" peacefully.

## Walesa's Message to New Leader

"I would like to express my delight that Lithuanian independence has been restored," Mr. Walesa said in a message sent to Vytautas Landsbergis, the newly elected President of Lithuania.

"I wish for you that the future process of re-establishing democracy will continue to be as peaceful as it has been until now," Mr. Walesa added.

Warsaw newspapers gave big front-page play to the Lithuanian story this morning, all prominently displaying the same picture of demonstrators carrying a sign, apparently for the benefit of Western television cameras, saying "Bye, bye U.S.S.R." The sign replaced the two S's in the lettering of "U.S.S.R." with the double-lightning-bolt insignia of the Nazi SS.

"Joy, this is the first feeling," a longtime dissident and Solidarity leader, Adam Michnik, wrote in a front-page editorial in his Solidarity newspaper, *Gazeta Wyborcza*. "Here's to you, Lithuanian brothers."

Poland and Lithuania were once united under a common monarchy.

## A 'Test' for Gorbachev

Mr. Michnik added that the decision "is a test for the policy of democratic reconstruction proclaimed by Mikhail Gorbachev," the Soviet President.

"Farewell, Hammer and Sickle," said the largest headline in the Government daily *Rzeczpospolita*, which once reflected the Communist Party line here.

"Lining up for freedom," was the headline over another front-page story about similar demands in the Soviet republics of Georgia, Estonia and the Ukraine.

In addition to the text of the inde-

pendence declaration, the Government paper's front page carried the revived symbol of Lithuania, a knight on horseback. Under that emblem, Lithuania was united in a confederation with Poland from 1386 until the two nations were fully merged in 1569. Russia annexed most of Lithuania in 1795 and the rest in 1815, and ruled it until its brief independence, from 1918 to 1940.

## Lithuanians Hear Solidarity

More than 300,000 people in Lithuania, or 8.7 percent of the population, are Poles, *Rzeczpospolita* reported.

Two Polish Solidarity legislators, Tadeusz Klopotowski and Henryk Wujec, spoke to bursts of applause at the Lithuanian Parliament.

Zbigniew Bujak, one of the fugitive leaders of the Solidarity underground during the period of martial law here, addressed a rally of about 50,000 Ukrainians in Kiev on Saturday.

The crowd waved national flags and banners declaring "No to the Soviet Empire," and voiced opposition to Mr. Gorbachev's plan to create a powerful presidency for himself, the opposition Rukh movement said in a message sent to journalists.

"Look at them," a Polish woman said proudly last night as she watched the Lithuanian parliament, mostly men in suits and ties, on the television news. "Don't they look European?"